

American media, while making billions of dollars off of the nation's electromagnetic spectrum, is no longer even attempting to serve the public interest. Instead, broadcast owners are skewing their news and programming to serve their own interests, political or fiscal. The influence of corporate earnings over news divisions, the nominally service oriented segments of television stations, can be seen in the appalling amount of time spent on local and national newscasts on the latest developments in reality TV shows. An appalling new development is the promotion of the political interests of the management, perhaps best exemplified by the actions of Sinclair Broadcasting.

Sinclair has completely usurped editorial control over the opinion segments on its stations by forcing centrally recorded diatribes onto local newscasts. In a shocking new development, the network's ownership is compelling its stations to run a "documentary" with a strong anti-Kerry slant as a news program within two weeks of the election. Such power to influence the electorate should not be held by a few large corporations.

Our media are moving farther from the public interest, and their own actions are proof of the need for stronger media regulation. Locally-owned stations would not feel the same pressure to promote a political agenda or to provide advertising for a national network show, rather than covering stories of real importance to their local viewers. If FCC commissioners take their duty to the American people seriously, they will act to reverse the growth of media empires and return valuable frequency allocations to the public that properly owns them.